

SECRETARY'S BOARD

Minutes: 7 July 2015

In the Chair:	Ms Ann Marie Dalton, Secretary of the University	
Present also:	Mr Mike Bates, Director of Student Recruitment	Ms Linsey Fender, Assistant to the Secretary
	Ms Philippa Burrell, Director of Administration (EGIS)	Ms Morag Heggie, Director of Administration (EBS)
	Ms Sue Collier, Director of Governance and Legal Services	Mr Campbell Powrie, Director of Administration (SML)
	Mr Malcolm Deans, Director of Campus Services	Mr Martyn Spence, Director of Marketing and Communications
	Ms Maggie Dunn, Director of Administration (SLS)	Ms Sheelagh Wallace, Director of Administration and Registrar (Dubai)
In Attendance:	Dr Liz Fellman, Director of Research and Enterprise Services	Ms Janice Yew, Chief Operating Officer (Malaysia)
	Ms Hannah Frances, Student Union President	Ms Lisa Herlihy, Clerk
Apologies:	Mr Mark Adderley, Director of Human Resource Development	Mr Paul Travill, Academic Registrar
	Mr Darren Cunningham, Director of Administration (MACS)	Mr Mike Roch, Director of Information Services
	Mr Andrew Menzies, Director of Finance	Ms Vivienne White, Director of Administration (TEX)
	Mr Derek Penman, Director of Administration (EPS)	

M15/77 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 2 JUNE 2015

The Board received and noted the minutes of the meeting of 2 June 2015, which were tabled at the meeting with apologies for the delay. The Board agreed that the minutes would be approved at the meeting on 4 August 2015. Members were invited to provide the clerk with any comments outwith the meeting.

M15/78 MATTERS ARISING REPORT FOLLOWING THE MEETING OF 2 JUNE 2015

The Board received and noted the matters arising report following the meeting of 2 June 2015.

M15/79 POLICIES UNDER DEVELOPMENT REPORT (SB/15/111)

The Board received and noted the Policies Under Development Report up to 7 July 2015.

M15/80 PROJECTS REGISTER (SB/15/112)

The Board received and noted the Projects Register, as at 26 June 2015.

The Board noted that implementation of the EGIS Change Programme continued and that the entry on the Register, currently showing as amber, would be updated accordingly.

The Board agreed that the project proposals currently in the pipeline would remain as 'proposals awaiting approval' pending further discussions with project owners.

M15/81 BUSINESS REPORTED BY THE CHAIR

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

The Chair invited the Director of Governance and Legal Services to provide an update on the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The Board noted that the Scottish Universities Secretaries Group had collectively established a Higher Education (HE) Prevent Working Group with the remit to:

- develop guidance to assist the Scottish universities in meeting their statutory duty per the Act; and
- be a forum for sharing good practice in addressing the statutory duty.

The Board noted that the guidance would be circulated to the Board following the meeting. The necessary actions would be taken forward by the University's Prevent Group.

The Board discussed the implications of the Act for the Heriot-Watt overseas campuses. They would not be included in the legislation, however actions would be taken to ensure that they were equipped to deal with any issues arising. The Board noted that the Court would receive a report on next steps towards compliance with the Act at their October 2015 meeting. The Board agreed that, prior to this meeting, the Dubai and Malaysia campuses would undertake major incident planning to ensure systems were in place to manage a major incident. The Head of Health and Safety, as well as local authorities, would be included in these planning sessions.

In regard to training for colleagues, which was a requirement under the Act, a number of training resources would soon become available and could be presented to the appropriate group of colleagues. Needs would necessarily differ depending on colleagues' roles and responsibilities and training would be adapted accordingly.

A member of the Board queried how the new legislation would affect the University's associate campuses and Approved Learning Partners. The Chair confirmed that the University would contact the relevant institutions to advise them of the existence of the Act and the requirements it placed upon the University. The Chair advised the Board that communications between the campuses would be reviewed to ensure appropriate processes were in place. The Security teams at each campus would also liaise with one another to ensure that a joined up approach was in place.

The Board agreed that a response team would be required in case of an incident so that the situation would be properly managed. The Chair would discuss the requirements with the Director of Governance and Legal Services. The University would form a Prevent Group and Terms of Reference for this Group would be presented to a future meeting of the Board.

The Board agreed that a detailed presentation and Action Plan would be presented at the August 2015 meeting of the Board.

M15/82 STUDENT BAROMETER SURVEY ACTION PLANS (SB/15/113 – SB/15/122)

The Board received and noted the Student Barometer Survey Action Plans, presented by the relevant Directors of Administration and Directors of the Professional Services. The Chair welcomed the Student Union President, who had been invited to the meeting to discuss this item.

During the course of this item the Board discussed the following points:

Dubai Campus

- that the University had regular meetings with StudyWorld regarding actions arising from the Student Barometer Survey and these were being progressed. A meet and greet session was being introduced for new students and more information was now available regarding facilities, such as the new accommodation in Dubai International Academic City;
- the Board agreed that the Director of Administration and Registrar (Dubai) would update some items to include further detail, including specific actions and timelines in response to the student feedback, and would circulate the updated Plan to members;

School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society (EGIS)

- that, following complaints regarding the 'hot desk' system in place for Postgraduate research students in EGIS, students had been offered the choice of a permanent desk with a PC or a laptop which could be used while hot desking. Students had continued to request permanent desk space, which would now be provided by a modular building. The Board discussed the space pressures within the University, which were also common in businesses, and noted that hot desking might be unavoidable in future as space was at a premium;
- that induction programmes in EGIS had been revised to provide greater support for students for whom English was not their first language;
- that IPE operated a system of block teaching and this had, in the past, caused issues with accommodating double teaching. EGIS would review these arrangements in the future so that the reasons for block teaching were fully understood;

School of Mathematical and Computer Sciences (MACS)

- that the Director of Learning and Teaching in MACS had met with all Directors of Studies to better co-ordinate deadlines between courses. This would allow students sufficient time to work on projects and assessments;

Information Services

- that issues regarding the study environment in the Library were being addressed via monitoring of temperature, light and other factors;
- that the University's print collection continued to be reduced and this would result in a 10% increase in study space in 2015/16;

Student Recruitment

- that the Scholarships Manager was now in place and would be reviewing current scholarship arrangements. A Scholarships Strategy was being developed and would be presented to the Board in autumn 2015;
- that difficulties were being experienced in finding appropriate space for Open Day sessions, due to the necessity of scheduling the Open Days on teaching days. The Board agreed that flexibility within the schedule was important and the Chair would discuss the current issues with the Timetabling team and the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) to explore possible solutions; and
- that reporting on application turnaround times was now in place to facilitate monitoring. The Board discussed the factors which could delay turnaround times, such as the link between applications and project deadline dates, or the need to gain an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate. The Director of Student Recruitment confirmed that these mitigating factors would be considered when reviewing application turnaround.

The Chair thanked the Student Union President for her contributions to the discussion. The Student Union President departed at this point.

M15/83

REPORTS FROM THE SCHOOLS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (SB/15/123 – SB/15/134)

The Board received and noted the reports from the Schools and Professional Services, presented by the Directors of Administration and the Directors of the Professional Services.

During the course of this item the Board discussed the following key points:

Campus Services

- that the refurbishment of James Watt Centre 2, originally planned for 2015, would now take place in 2016. This would allow pre-booked conferences to take place in 2015. The funding in the 2015 budget would be used to complete works in EPS which would accommodate their new Global Platform appointments;
- the Chair advised that the Director of Campus Services and the Director of Governance

and Legal Services would review the contracts used by the Conference team and would update these as necessary;

- the Board agreed that the Director of Marketing and Communications would consider how this could be communicated to students;

Dubai Campus

- that the dates for local holidays in Dubai had been proposed, though these were subject to confirmation by the Knowledge and Human Development Agency (KHDA). The Board agreed that the dates of local holidays would be published on the webpage for each University campus;
- the arrangements currently in place for having a single examination timetable. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had been completed to evaluate the impact of the timetable on Ramadan, which overlapped with exams in some places. The Board agreed that this EIA would be presented to a future meeting of the Board so that it could be discussed in depth. The Board also agreed that the documentation and EIA would be presented to the University Executive at a future meeting due to the potential impact on students across the University's campuses;
- that securing Visas for potential employees from certain countries was difficult in Dubai and this was causing issues with some academic appointments. The Board agreed that the issue would be highlighted in information provided to potential University employees;
- the Board agreed that the results of the Dubai Student Survey, which was modelled on the National Student Survey, would be presented to the Secretary's Board at a future meeting;

Edinburgh Schools

- the Director of Administration (SML) highlighted that students from the Rest of the UK (RUK) who wished to undertake an inter-campus transfer could only borrow £1,300 against their fees, which might cause issues for these students. The Board agreed that the Director of Administration (SML) would discuss the matter with the Academic Registrar and the Director of Student Recruitment outwith the meeting;
- that arrangements were in place in Malaysia to welcome transfer students and ensure that they settled in well. The Chief Operating Officer and Registrar (Malaysia) would liaise with Edinburgh colleagues to organise similar arrangements for Malaysian transfer students;

Human Resource Development (HRD)

- the Board agreed that the results of the Employee Engagement Survey would be presented to the Board at the August 2015 meeting;

Marketing and Communications

- the Board agreed that the draft Communications Plan would be presented to the Board at a future meeting;
- the Board agreed that the Director of HRD and the Director of Marketing and Communications would liaise regarding the presentation of the Employee Engagement Survey results to colleagues;
- that Marketing and Communications would be working to develop communications between colleagues and line managers to improve internal communications. The Board discussed a number of possibilities, such as a local staff newsletter, and agreed that the Director of HRD and the Director of Marketing and Communications would discuss how colleagues could be trained as communicators. The Board agreed that the Director of Marketing and Communications would bring further information back to the Board;

Student Recruitment

- **Reserved section (Ref: Sections 30, 33 FOI(S) A 2002)**

M15/84 GROUP FINANCIAL DASHBOARD (SB/15/135)

The Board received and noted the Group Financial Dashboard, presented by the Chair.

The Board noted that the Group had a surplus of £13.2 million, a positive variance on the budget of £1.5 million. Schools were mostly adverse to budget due to lower than planned student recruitment, while the Professional Services were favourable to budget due to unfilled vacancies and timing differences.

M15/85 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES SELF-ASSESSMENT TEAM (ATHENA SWAN) TERMS OF REFERENCE (SB/15/136)

The Board received and noted the Professional Services Self-Assessment Team (Athena SWAN) Terms of Reference, presented by the Director of Governance and Legal Services.

The Board discussed how the Self-Assessment Team would ensure that the views of a range of colleagues were considered. The Director of Governance and Legal Services confirmed that the Employee Engagement Forum would be used for this purpose and that refreshed Terms of Reference for the Forum were being developed. The Board agreed that the Terms of Reference for the Professional Services Self-Assessment Team and the Employee Engagement Forum would be presented at a future meeting of the Board for approval, along with a high-level milestones plan up to November 2016.

M15/86 UNIVERSITIES UK STATEMENT REGARDING ACADEMIC BOYCOTTS (SB/15/136)

The Board received and noted the Universities UK statement, presented by the Chair.

The Chair advised the Board that the statement should be highlighted to colleagues in the Schools, as it clarified that Universities UK did not support academic boycotts.

M15/87 QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS REPORT (SB/15/138)

The Board received and noted the Quarterly Complaints Report, presented by the Chair, and recommended this for onward transmission to the University Executive.

The Board highlighted that two items were showing as red on the report because final details were awaited from Finance and the Dubai campus. The Chair advised that entries must be updated before the report was presented to the University Executive in August 2015.

M15/88 CHILD STUDENT POLICY (SB/15/139)

The Board received and noted a draft of the Child Student Policy, presented by the Director of Governance and Legal Services.

The Director of Governance and Legal Services highlighted that detailed guidance was being developed to support the Policy, which was still in the draft stage. Colleagues, particularly in the Schools, were asked to be vigilant so that potential child students were identified at the earliest opportunity. The Health and Safety email address could be used to alert the appropriate colleagues of a potential child student.

The Board noted that no local legislation applied in Dubai and further investigation into legislation in Malaysia would take place. The Board discussed the possibility of setting a flag on the University's admissions system which would highlight child students to colleagues. The Board agreed that the Director of Governance and Legal Services would discuss the implementation with the Head of the Student Systems Unit.

M15/89 REPORT FROM THE STRATEGIC INFORMATION SERVICES COMMITTEE (SB/15/140)

The Board received and noted the report from the Strategic Information Services Committee, presented by the Chair.

The Chair highlighted item 3.8 in the report, which listed the costs of system projects mooted for 2015/16. The Board approved the plans to implement the following projects:

- Estates Management System
- SAS Revitalisation
- Library Management System
- Prospectii Management System
- iHR Fine-tune

The Board agreed that the Web/Digital Review project would require further discussion between the Secretary of the University, the Director of Marketing and Communications and the Strategic Information Services Committee.

M15/90 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair advised the Board that the establishment of a Global Student Liaison Committee of the Court had been approved by the Court, to be chaired by an independent lay member of the Court. The Terms of Reference for this Committee were currently under development and would be presented to the Board for information after the Committee had held its first meeting in the autumn.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 4 August 2015